

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	: Udo Klein et al	Art Unit	: 2174
Serial No.	: 10/675,208	Examiner	: Chris A. Watt
Filed	: September 30, 2003	Conf. No.	: 9931
Title	: VARIABLE SIZE INPUT AREAS IN USER INTERFACES		

MAIL STOP AF

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

REPLY TO ACTION OF MAY 2, 2007

In response to the final action of May 2, 2007, applicant asks that all claims be allowed in view of the following remarks. Claims 1-20 are currently pending, of which claims 1 and 13 are independent.

Claims 1-20 have been rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,230,062 (Inaki) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,450,538 (Glaser) and Wallack (U.S. Patent No. 6,055,550). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection because neither Inaki, Glaser, Wallack, nor any proper combination of the references, describes or suggests the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 13.

Claims 1 and 13 each recite displaying a user input area within a computer user interface. More particularly, claims 1 and 13 recite displaying the user input area that corresponds to a data field having a specified number of characters. The user input area has a size that visually indicates to a user that the user input area will accommodate therein visual representations of the specified number of characters, and, upon receipt of a user input specifying a character to be included in the data field, displaying within the user input area a visual representation of the input character in a proportional font. Claims 1 and 13 also recite adjusting the size of the user input area based on a size of characters included in the data field and the specified number of characters of the data field, where the size of characters included in the data field includes a size of the input character. Claims 1 and 13 further recite displaying the adjusted user input area having a new size that visually indicates to the user that the user input area will accommodate therein visual representations of a remaining number of the specified number of characters of the data field.

The action acknowledges that "Inaki does not disclose visual indication of the change in size or adjusting the size of the user input area based on the size of characters included in the data field and the specified number of characters in the data field." Action at page 4, lines 8-10.

The action again relies on Glaser for disclosing "a user input area within a computer user interface...., and that the input visually ...indicates ... to a user that the user area will accommodate therein visual representations ... adjusting the size of the user input area displaying the adjusted user input area having a new size that visually indicates to the user that the user input area will accommodate therein visual representations of a remaining number of the specified number of characters of the data field." See action at page 4, line 11 to page 5, line 10. The action repeats the same text used in the action mailed February 2, 2007 in rejecting the same claim language as being obvious over Inaki in view of Glaser. Compare action at page 4, line 11 to page 5, line 17 with action of February 2, 2007 at page 4, line 8 to page 5, line 15. In order to respond completely, applicant repeats below arguments filed in response to February 2, 2007 to which the present action rejecting the same claim language as being obvious over Inaki in view of Glaser and Wallack is responsive.

Glaser discloses techniques for a graphical user interface control for expansion and re-sizing of data fields in electronic forms. See Glaser at col. 2, lines 9-25 (summary). More particularly, Glaser discloses:

A computer interface system employing a menu-graphical graphical user interface for the entry of text data in a data store receives user inputs for controlling the graphical user interface, which interface provides a document form display including at least one data entry field for text entry. The system is invested with the ability to generate a pointer in the display which is positionable in response to a control input from a user. The system is responsive to a selected positioning of the pointer and to a further control input from the user for varying the size of the data field.

Glaser at Abstract. As such, Glaser discloses a user-driven process for controlling a graphical user interface.

More particularly, Glaser's system is responsive to a control input from a user for conducting a resizing operation to vary the size of the data field. See Glaser at col. 2, lines 11-19. Glaser describes techniques that enable a user to position a mouse pointer to resize a data entry field in FIGS. 3-5. See Glaser at col. 5, line 1 to col. 6, line 48. Glaser states:

Thus, with reference now to FIGS. 3, 4, and 5, together with the pseudocode listing of Appendix B, the data entry field 141 bearing the data descriptor "Comments," is dynamically expandable in order to provide for the input of extended text data into a data store. To expand the data entry field 141, the user operates the mouse 60 to position a mouse pointer over the grabpoint rectangle 142 provided at the lower right hand corner of the data entry field. This action is illustrated at step 300 of the flow diagram of FIG. 5. In the data entry field expansion module 170, a position determining element 180 controls the processor 20 to continuously sample an input from the mouse 60 to determine whether the mouse pointer is within the rectangle position of the grab point icon....

When the mouse button is released, the re-sizing control input is deactivated and the data field resizing procedure is terminated. A text return element 260 controls the processor 20 to fetch the text data previously stored and return it to the data entry field.

Glaser at col. 5, lines 1-15 and col. 6, lines 33-37.

As such, Glaser discloses a user controlling a mouse pointer to resize a data entry field and display of previously entered text data in the re-sized data entry. Hence, Glaser does not describe or suggest adjusting the size of the user input area *based on a size of characters included in the data field and the specified number of characters of the data field*, where the size of characters included in the data field includes a size of the input character, as recited in claims 1 and 13.

Therefore, neither Inaki, Glaser, nor any proper combination of the two references, describes or suggests adjusting the size of the user input area based on a size of characters included in the data field and the specified number of characters of the data field, where the size of characters included in the data field includes a size of the input character, as recited by claims 1 and 13.

Turning to Wallack, the action indicates that "Wallack teaches adjusting the size of the user input area based on the size of characters included in the data field *and the specified number of characters of the data field.*" See action at page 5, lines 18-20 (citing Wallack at steps 200 and 230 in FIG. 2 et seq.) (emphasis added). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Rather, Wallack discloses a system that “resizes selected groups of cells to optimize viewing of data on a computer displayed form.” Wallack at col. 3, lines 11-13. In a particular embodiment, Wallack discloses:

the selected group of cells are aligned in a column on a form that includes rows and columns to form a matrix. The form is populated with data from records that may be stored at remote data sources. To auto size a selected group of cells, a sampling of records that display data in the selected group of cells are identified. For each record selected, a display size is calculated based on the corresponding data. A display size is a size that is [sic] large enough to display, without obstruction, data from a record in the corresponding cell. From all of the display sizes calculated, a single optimal size for each cell in the group of cells is determined. Based on the optimal size, the group of cells are resized, and additional cells, which are visible on the computer generated form, are also resized or moved to reflect the resizing of the selected group of cells.

Wallack at col. 3, lines 14-29. As such, Wallack discloses auto resizing of selected groups of cells to optimize viewing of data on the computer generated form. See also Wallack at col. 3, lines 11-13.

Wallack discloses a flow diagram illustrating an embodiment for auto sizing of fields on a computer generated form based on sample records in FIG. 2. See Wallack at col. 3, lines 31-35 (describing adjusting the width of columns for one or more selected rows while maintaining a constant height for the row). To do so, Wallack's system first queries the user for the column to be adjusted and sampling information, which may include the number of records to sample, or specific records, such as records currently displayed on the output display. See Wallack at col. 3, lines 39-48 (describing block 200 of FIG. 2). Wallack's system iteratively calculates the display width of the cell for a sample record, compares the current sample record's cell width to the stored width, the current width is stored to identify the longest width. See Wallack at col. 4, lines 15-34 (describing blocks 230-260 of FIG. 2). Wallack's system, after comparing all sample records, resets the width of the column specified by a user to the stored width. See Wallack at col. 4, lines 31-37. Wallack's system also enables a user to specify a minimum column width for the selected column being resized. See Wallack at col. 3, line 54-55 (describing block 220 of FIG. 2) and col. 4, lines 22-25. Hence, Wallack discloses resizing a field on a computer generated form based on a sample of records or a minimum size for a field.

Accordingly, Wallack does not disclose adjusting the size of the user input area based on a size of characters included in the data field *and the specified number of characters of the data field*, much less doing so where the size of characters included in the data field includes a size of the input character, as recited in claims 1 and 13.

Therefore, neither Inaki, Glaser, Wallack nor any proper combination of the references, describes or suggests adjusting the size of the user input area *based on a size of characters included in the data field and the specified number of characters of the data field*, where the size of characters included in the data field includes a size of the input character, as recited by claims 1 and 13.

Further, because the references, alone or in combination, do not describe or suggest adjusting the size of the user input area based on a size of characters included in the data field and the specified number of characters of the data field, where the size of characters included in the data field includes a size of the input character, neither Inaki, Glaser, Wallack nor any proper combination of the references, describes or suggests displaying the adjusted user input area having a new size that visually indicates to the user that the user input area will accommodate therein visual representations of a remaining number of the specified number of characters of the data field, also as recited in claims 1 and 13.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdraw of the rejection of claims 1 and 13 and their respective dependent claims 2-12 and 14-20.

Applicant submits that all claims are in condition for allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

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Attorney's Docket No.: 16104-005001 / 2003P00582 US

No fee is believed to be due in connection with the filing of this paper on the Electronic Filing System (EFS). In the event that any fees are due, please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 18, 2007

Barbara A. Benoit

Barbara A. Benoit
Reg. No. 54,777

Customer No.: 32864
Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W.
11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331